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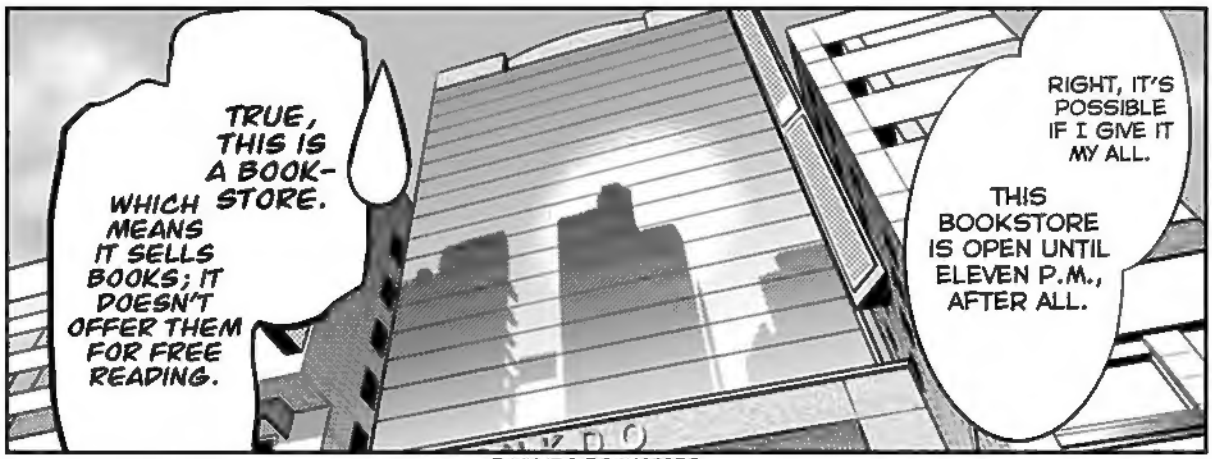
23

HEY,
UTAHA-SENPAI.
WHAT'S WRONG, MORALS-KUN?
PLEASE LEAVE ME ALONE FOR NOW.
I'M SORRY... BUT,
HOW LONG ARE WE GOING TO STAY HERE?

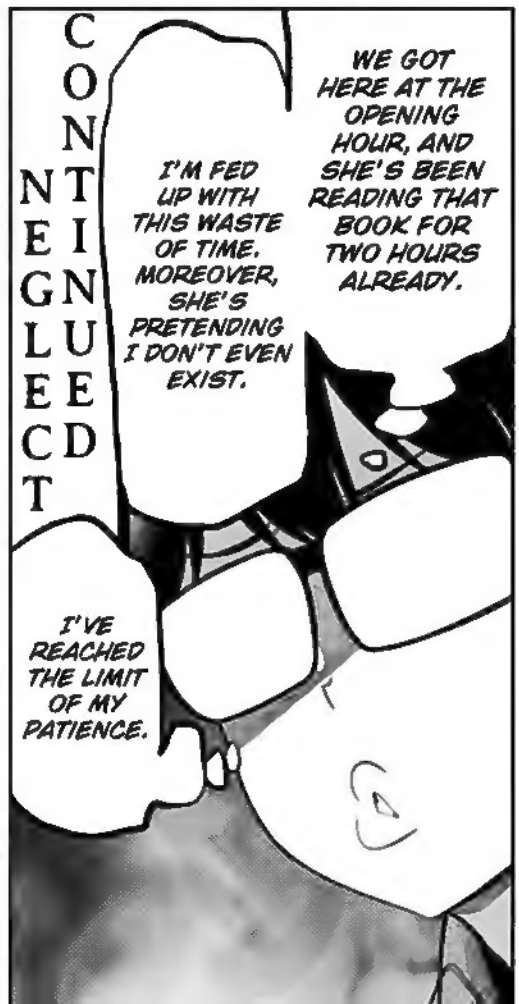
RIGHT,
HOW ABOUT UNTIL I FINISH ALL SIXTY-EIGHT VOLUMES OF THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SHIBA RYOTARO?
...YOU MUST BE KIDDING.
WELL THEN, I'LL COMPROMISE AND JUST READ THE FIRST ONE.
PLEASE STOP MAKING SUCH OMINOUS JOKES THAT YOU COULD ACTUALLY PULL OFF!

TL NOTE: SHIBA RYOTARO IS A JAPANESE NOVELIST FAMOUS FOR HISTORICAL FICTION.


RIGHT, IT'S POSSIBLE IF I GIVE IT MY ALL.
THIS BOOKSTORE IS OPEN UNTIL ELEVEN P.M., AFTER ALL.
TRUE, THIS IS A BOOKSTORE. WHICH MEANS IT SELLS BOOKS; IT DOESN'T OFFER THEM FOR FREE READING.

JUNKUDO BOOKSTORE

IT CAN'T BE HELPED.
THEN I'LL BUY THIS BOOK I FAILED TO FINISH.
...I'M NOT GOING TO COMPLAIN THAT YOU SHOULD'VE DONE THAT IN THE FIRST PLACE.
SFX: CLOSE


CONTINUED
NEGLECT
WE GOT HERE AT THE OPENING HOUR, AND SHE'S BEEN READING THAT BOOK FOR TWO HOURS ALREADY.
I'M FED UP WITH THIS WASTE OF TIME. MOREOVER, SHE'S PRETENDING I DON'T EVEN EXIST.
I'VE REACHED THE LIMIT OF MY PATIENCE.

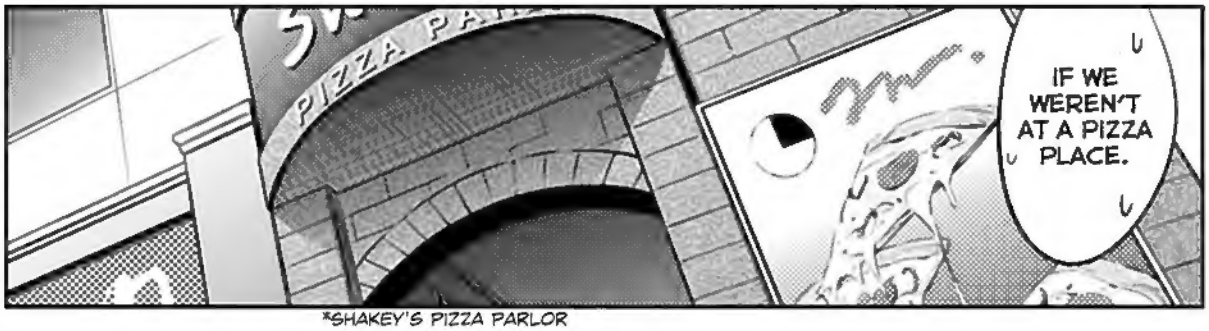
NOW LET'S GO, MORALS-KUN.
W-WAIT A SECOND!
I NEED TO ORGAN-ISE MY BACK-PACK FIRST!
DIDN'T YOU PROMISE TO BE A PORTER AND SUGAR DADDY?
BUT YOU GIVE UP AFTER THE FIRST STORE. WHAT A LIAR.
I DIDN'T EXPECT YOU TO BUY FIVE SUPER-HEAVY AND EXPENSIVE HARDCOVERS THERE...

IT CAN'T BE HELPED.
I WAS SO BUSY WITH WRITING THESE PAST FEW DAYS, I COULDN'T SPARE ANY TIME TO READ BOOKS.
WELL, I CAN'T BUY THE COMPLETE WORKS, BUT LEAVE LUNCH TO ME.
I'LL DO MY BEST WITHIN "A HIGH-SCHOOLER'S MEANS" TODAY.
YEAH, THAT'S TODAY'S GOAL.

RIGHT, I'LL TAKE AS MUCH PLEASURE AS "THE STAMINA OF HIGH-SCHOOLERS" WILL ALLOW.
YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT MY CARRYING YOUR BAGGAGE, RIGHT?!
THIS AUTHORESS REALLY LOVES TO USE EXPRESS-IONS THAT EASILY BREED MISUNDER-STANDING...
.....

THERE'S A PLACE I WANT TO VISIT WITH YOU THIS SATURDAY.
UTAHA-SENPAI ASKED ME FOR THIS DAT- I MEAN, SHOPPING TRIP.

SORRY FOR THE WAIT...
ERIRI.
YOU'RE LATE!
WHY'D YOU TAKE SO LONG ABOUT IT?
THEY ALREADY LEFT!
WHO THE HECK ARE THEY?
MOST IMPORTANTLY, WHY DID YOU ASK ME TO COME?
LISTEN WELL, AND DON'T BE SURPRISED.
THAT KASUMIGAOKA UTAHA AND-
OKAY~ I GOT IT.
NO NEED TO EXPLAIN.
フハハハ!!



*SHAKEY'S PIZZA PARLOR

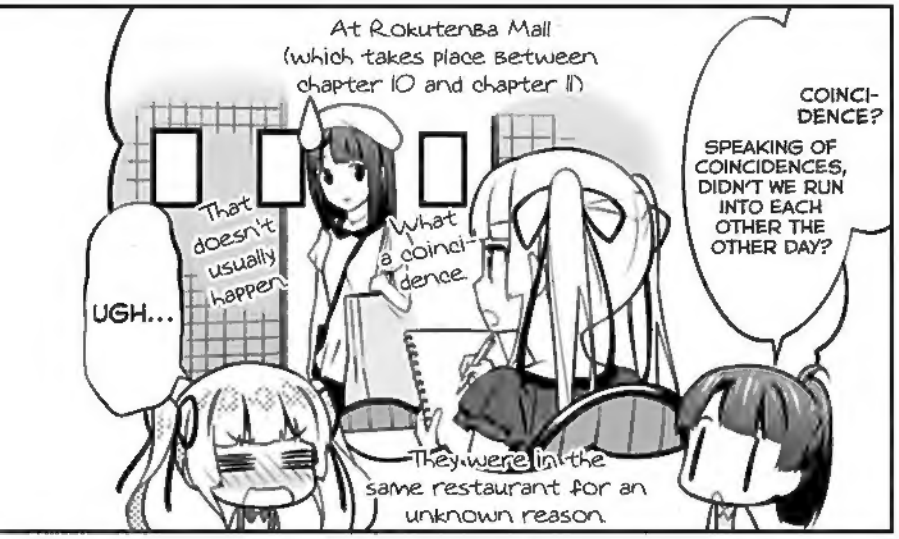
HOW UNEXPECTED OF YOU TO SAVE FACE.
I WOULDN'T MIND LOSING FACE IF YOU DIDN'T SHATTER MY PRIDE LIKE THIS!
WHEN I BROUGHT HER A PIZZA,
I DON'T WANT TO GET MY HAND GREASY.
Ehh?
No
SHE DIDN'T BOTHER WITH IT.
HOW DISCOURAGING OF HER.
SHE STARTED READING THE BOOK SHE'D BOUGHT AT THE TABLE,
AND PICKING UP CHIPS WITH CHOPSTICKS.

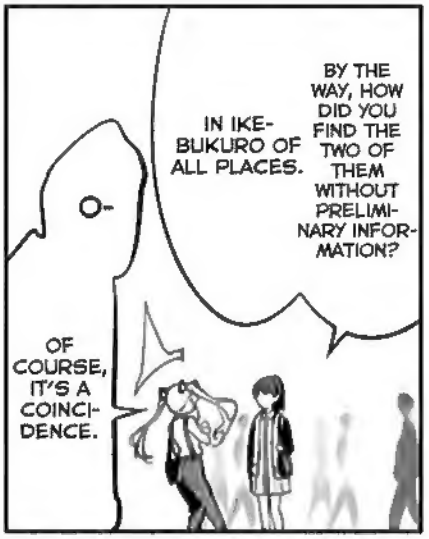
WHERE DO YOU WANT TO GO NEXT?
... WELL THEN,
DON'T SNEAK AN INAPPRO-PRIATE DESIRE INTO THAT LIST!
IT CAN'T BE HELPED.
MY LUST IS FOR KNOWLEDGE RATHER THAN FOOD OR SEX.
I BEG YOU! PLEASE STOP TREATING ME AS IF I'M NOT EVEN HERE!
WELL,
I DON'T MIND ANY PLACE AS LONG AS I CAN SIT DOWN AND READ BOOKS CALMLY IN WARMTH AND SILENCE.
HEY SENPAI,
WHY DON'T WE GO TO A MOVIE?
WHAT SHOULD I DO...?
ANYWAY, SHE SEEMS FULLY SATISFIED, WHICH MEANS MY PURPOSE OF ENTERTAINING HER IS SERVED, EVEN THOUGH IT'S ENTIRELY THANKS TO SHIBA-SENSEI.

SOUNDS OKAY.
.....
8
RABEN
THEY MUST BE IN A RADIUS OF 200 METRES!
MOST IMPORTANTLY, THERE ARE TOO MANY PEOPLE HERE!
Haa!
Gulp!
HOW STRANGE.
THEY'RE NOWHERE TO BE SEEN.
!
REALLY?
HOW?
NO MATTER HOW CROWDED IT IS, I CAN RECOGNISE TOMOYA AT ONCE...
I THINK THERE ARE MYRIADS OF PEOPLE IN THAT AREA ALONE.

HARD TO MISS!
HE REEKS OF OTAKUDOM!
あああ
THAT'S BE-CAUSE...
HE'S H-
I THINK IT'S YOU WHO'S HARDEST TO MISS HERE.
... NEVER MIND.

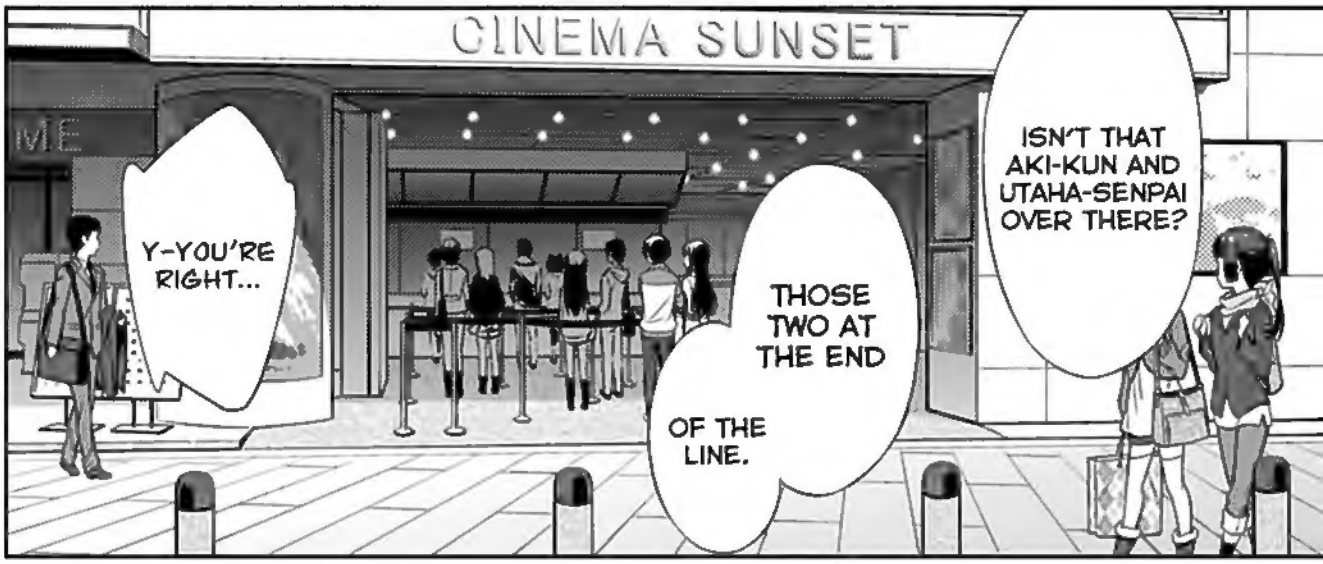
SFX: BLUSH


At Rokutenba Mall (which takes place between chapter 10 and chapter 11)
COINCI-DENCE?
SPEAKING OF COINCIDENCES, DIDN'T WE RUN INTO EACH OTHER THE OTHER DAY?
What a coinci-dence.
That doesn't usually happen.
UGH...
They were in the same restaurant for an unknown reason.

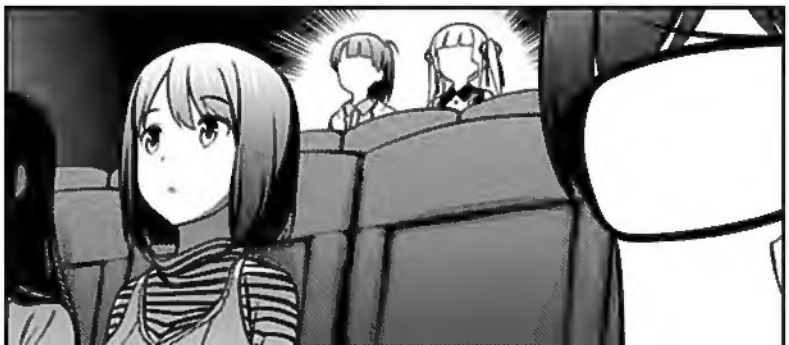

BY THE WAY, HOW DID YOU FIND THE TWO OF THEM WITHOUT PRELIMI-NARY INFOR-MATION?
IN IKE-BUKURO OF ALL PLACES.
O-
OF COURSE, IT'S A COINCI-DENCE.

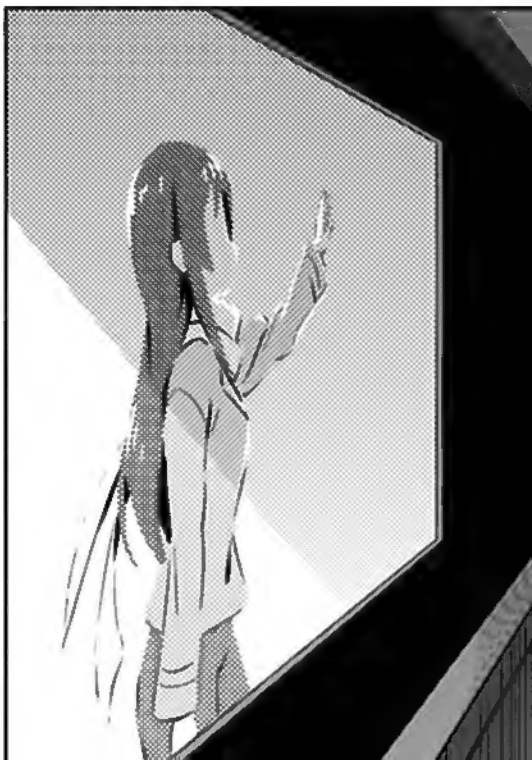
I-I WASN'T LYING! IT REALLY WAS A COINCID-
WH-
WHAT?

THIS IS WHY I HATE WOMEN WITH SHARP IN-STINCTS.
HUH?


CINEMA SUNSET
ISN'T THAT AKI-KUN AND UTAHA-SENPAI OVER THERE?
THOSE TWO AT THE END OF THE LINE.
Y-YOU'RE RIGHT...

THE PRISM OF SNOW
PLAYING
ERM, WELL, COULD YOU PLEASE DROP THE IDEA THAT I'M ARTFUL?
AS EXPECTED OF MEGUMI!
YOU'RE THE BEST AT FEIGNING INDIFFERENCE TO PUT YOUR ENEMY OFF-GUARD, AND THEN SNATCHING THE SPOTLIGHT!
SFX: RUN





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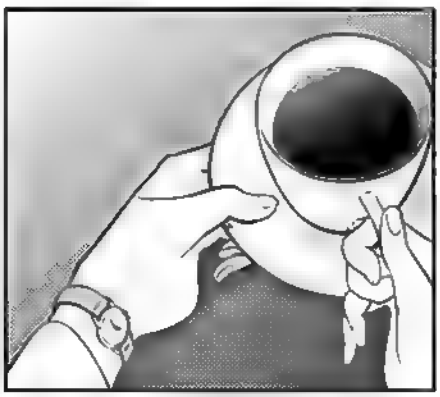
SFX: SOB

EVEN THOUGH THE STORY HAD TOO MANY SUPERFLUOUS PARTS.
THE GRAPHIC DESIGNS AND THE DIRECTING WERE WORTH WATCHING,



BUT THE LAST SCENE WAS QUITE GOOD.
SHE IS THE DISTINCTIVE FACTOR THAT RUINS THE MOVIE WHOSE ORIGINAL TV ANIME WAS A MASTERPIECE.
THE CREDIT FOR THAT GOES TO THE CHARACTER DESIGNER. SHE'S JUST A PLOT DEVICE TO SHOW THE HIDDEN PLOT.

DO YOU THINK SO?
WASN'T THE NEW CHARACTER VERY APPEALING?

I THINK THAT'S WHEN YOU AS A FAN...
SHOULD GIVE AN HONEST COMPLIMENT THAT THE CHARACTERS AND DIRECTING ARE GOOD, INSTEAD OF CRITICISING THE SCRIPT.
THE CREDIT FOR THAT GOES TO THE DIRECTING.
THE SCRIPT'S FLAT AND TRITE, BUT THEY'VE MANAGED TO MAKE THE ENDING FEEL LIKE "I DON'T KNOW BUT IT LOOKS AWESOME!"
SUCH BLIND FAITH EVENTUALLY CORRUPTS CREATORS.
BUT I'M A CONSUM-ER-TYPE OTAKU, AFTER ALL.
I DON'T WANT HEAR SOMETHING SO IRRESPONSIBLE FROM A DIRECTOR WHO WANTS TO MAKE A GAME BASED ON MY SCENARIO.
UGH...
I UNDER-STAND THE "EYE" PART ...
BUT WHAT ABOUT COURAGE?
LISTEN WELL, MORALS-KUN,
YOU OUGHT TO HAVE AN EYE FOR GOOD AND BAD, AND THE COURAGE TO SPEAK OPENLY.
FOR EXAMPLE, IT'S COURAGE WITH WHICH YOU DENOUNCE MY WORK IF YOU THINK IT HAS FLAWS.
... WON'T YOU BE MAD IF I DO THAT?
OF COURSE, I WON'T. WHAT ELSE IS MORE GRATIFYING THAN A SERIOUS READER'S FEEDBACK?

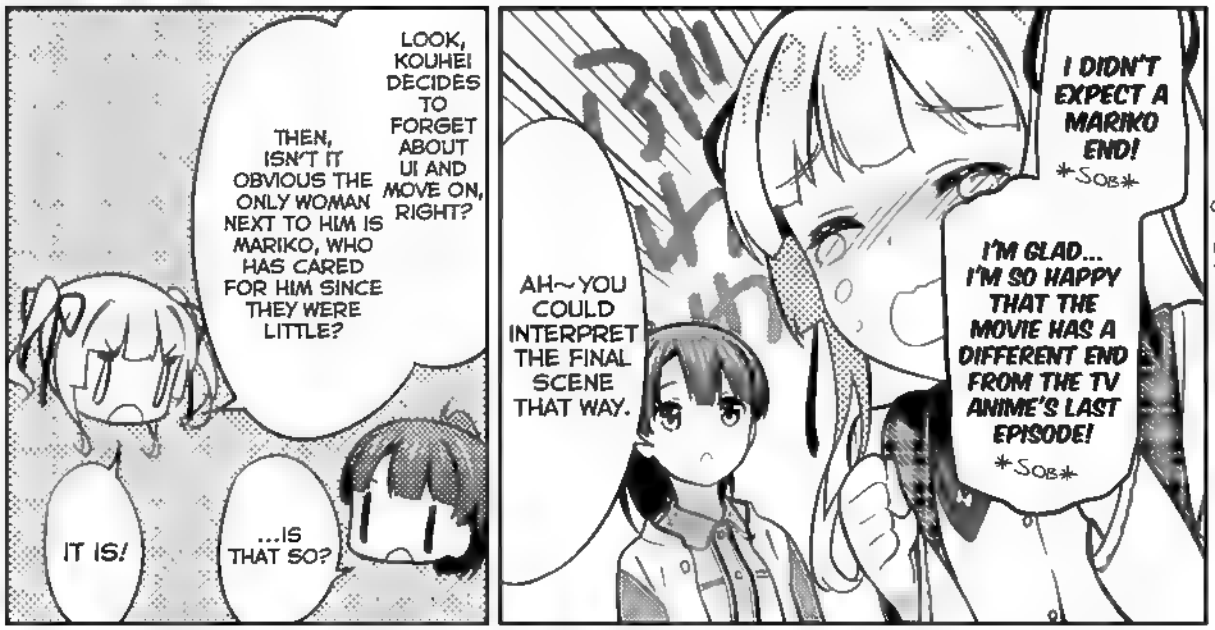
I THOUGHT A MOVIE WAS THE BEST CHOICE TO SATISFY UTAHA-SENPAI'S INTELLECTUAL CURIOSITY.
WHY AM I HERE GETTING A LECTURE?
EVEN SO...
AS IF I'D MAKE SUCH A DANGEROUS GAMBLE!
WELL, I'M SURE I'LL SULK. I WON'T SPEAK TO YOU FOR A MONTH. SHOULD THE FEEDBACK BE SILLY, I'LL NEVER SPEAK TO YOU FOR THE REMAINDER OF MY LIFE.

AH,
NOW THAT GIRL SEEMS TO HAVE CALMED DOWN, IT'S TIME TO LEAVE.
WELL THEN,

LET ME PA-
NO NEED FOR MACHO BRAVADO. THIS TEA-HOUSE ISN'T PART OF YOUR PLAN, IS IT?

BUT NOW WE'RE FINALLY HAVING A DAT- I MEAN, SHOPPING.
SHE WAS TOO BUSY READING BOOKS TO TALK UNTIL JUST NOW,

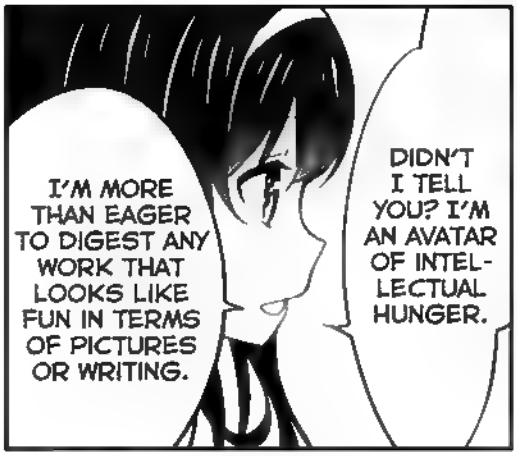
I HOPE YOU TRY HARDER TO MAKE UP FOR THIS BILL.
WELL,
I GUESS SHE SAW MY TROUBLED EXPRESSION WHEN I LOOKED AT THE PRICES ON THE MENU WHILE ORDERING.
I'M ASHAMED.
W-
WEEH ...
BY THE WAY, WHO IS "THAT GIRL"?
I'M SORRY, MEGUMI.
I SHOWED YOU AN UGLY SCENE.
Y-YEAH ...
ARE YOU CALMING DOWN?
B-
BUT ...
SFX: SNIFF
WEEH ...

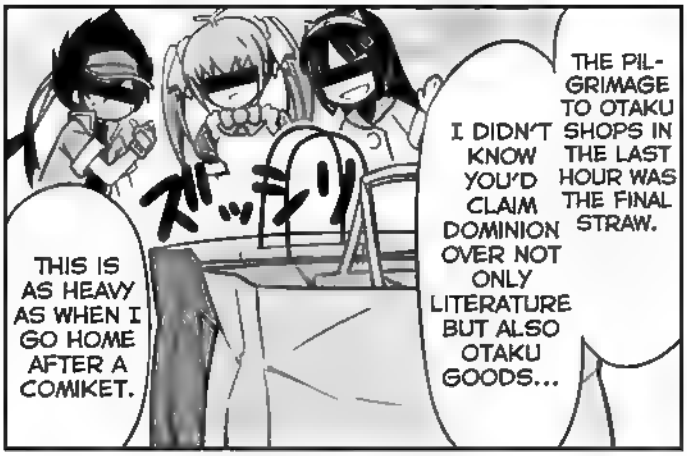

LOOK, KOUHEI DECIDES TO FORGET ABOUT UI AND MOVE ON, RIGHT?
THEN, ISN'T IT OBVIOUS THE ONLY WOMAN NEXT TO HIM IS MARIKO, WHO HAS CARED FOR HIM SINCE THEY WERE LITTLE?
IT IS!
...IS THAT SO?
AH~ YOU COULD INTERPRET THE FINAL SCENE THAT WAY.
I DIDN'T EXPECT A MARIKO END! *SOB*
I'M GLAD... I'M SO HAPPY THAT THE MOVIE HAS A DIFFERENT END FROM THE TV ANIME'S LAST EPISODE! *SOB*

TL NOTE: MARIKO IS A CHILDHOOD FRIEND HEROINE IN THE PRISM OF SNOW.

AH~ OKAY, OKAY, I'M GLAD THE CHILDHOOD FRIEND WINS THERE.
FORGET IT! IT'S MORE IMPORTANT TO TALK ABOUT THE PRISM OF SNOW!
WELL, ANYWAY, IT LOOKS LIKE THEY'RE LEAVING.

WHAT A DAY~
Sigh~
SO EVEN YOU GET TIRED.


DIDN'T I TELL YOU? I'M AN AVATAR OF INTELLECTUAL HUNGER.
I'M MORE THAN EAGER TO DIGEST ANY WORK THAT LOOKS LIKE FUN IN TERMS OF PICTURES OR WRITING.


THE PILGRIMAGE TO OTAKU SHOPS IN THE LAST HOUR WAS THE FINAL STRAW.
I DIDN'T KNOW YOU'D CLAIM DOMINION OVER NOT ONLY LITERATURE BUT ALSO OTAKU GOODS...
THIS IS AS HEAVY AS WHEN I GO HOME AFTER A COMIKET.
ズッシリ

ANYWAY, CONGRATS ON THE COMPLETION OF YOUR SCENARIOS.
Cheers, let's drink our juice.
I'M SORRY IT TOOK LONGER THAN EXPECTED.
SFX: CLINK

WHY DON'T YOU USE A*ZON.COM?
UNLIKE SAWAMURA-SAN, I'M NOT COMFORTABLE WITH IT.
I HAVE TO TOUCH IT, OR I DON'T GET THE IMPULSE TO BUY...

DON'T I SOUND POOR?
HAHA...
WELL, SHE'S TOO FOLKSY FOR A WRITER WHO'S SOLD HALF A MILLION BOOKS IN HER HIGH-SCHOOL YEARS.
OR MAYBE I'M COMPARING HER TO ERIRI, WHO'S UNREALISTIC.

BUT WHY DON'T YOU SAY THAT TO MACHIDA-SAN INSTEAD OF ME?
IT'S A LITTLE STRANGE TO HEAR THAT FROM YOU,
I-I'M PREPARED FOR IT!
ESPECIALLY FOR YOU, WHO ARE IN CHARGE OF SCRIPTING.
BUT MY DELAY WILL MAKE A HELL OF THE NEXT STAGE, YOU KNOW.
NOW MY PART IS OVER.
SFX: CLINK
YEAH, IT'S BEEN REAL-
I MIGHT NOT GO TO THE CLUB FROM NOW ON.
I HAVE TO WORK ON MY NOVEL.

...Y-
YOU'RE RIGHT.
ALSO, IT'S ABOUT TIME I SHOULD START CONSIDERING UNIVERSITY OPTIONS.
SFX: CLINK
...
YOU'RE RIGHT.
I'M GOING TO TRY SPECIAL ADMISSION BY RECOMMENDATION.
WELL, GIVEN MY ACCOMPLISHMENTS TO THIS DAY,
.....
...AH.

I HEARD THERE'S STILL A SPOT LEFT FOR DOUMEI UNIVERSITY.
WHEN I TALKED TO AN ADVISOR, HE SAID IT'D BE EASY FOR ME.
Y-
YEAH, THAT'S RIGHT!
I BET THERE ARE A LOT OF SCHOOLS WILLING TO ACCEPT YOU GIVEN YOUR ACADEMIC RECORD!
D-
DOUMEI UNIVERSI-TY IS...
IN KANSAI, ISN'T IT?

ANOTHER OPTION IS SOOU UNIVERSITY.
I CAN COMMUTE THERE FROM HOME.
SFX: MOVE SLOWLY...
I'M SORT OF TORN BETWEEN THEM.
SFX: BA-DUMP
...SO,
WHAT'S WRONG, MORALS-KUN?
IT'S ALMOST WINTER, BUT YOU'RE SWEATING HEAVILY.

SO,
MORALS-KUN... WHICH ONE DO YOU THINK IS BETTER?
WH-WHICH ONE...?
ERM, WELL...
DOUMEI HAS A BETTER COURSE IN LITERATURE.
I-I SEE.
BUT IT'S A PAIN TO MOVE OUT AND LIVE ALONE.
Y-YEAH.
BUT I CAN'T SAY I'M UNINTERESTED IN LIVING A LIFE OF FREEDOM.
HUH...
HEY,
WHAT'S WRONG?

WHY ARE YOU PANICKING SO MUCH?

SHE WAS TOYING WITH ME!
Huh?
Huh?
Why?
Why~?
SFX: UPSET

I WANT YOU TO TAKE WHAT I'M GOING TO SAY AS A MERE SUGGESTION.
OKAY.
I'LL JUST TAKE IT INTO CONSIDER-ATION.
NEEDLESS TO SAY, IT'S JUST CONSIDER-ATION, SO IT WILL BE MY DECISION TO MAKE IN THE END.

.....

L-LISTEN ...
HM?

WELL, IT'S JUST MY OPINION, AND I THINK IT'LL HELP YOU TO LISTEN TO OTHER PEOPLE AS WELL.
INDEED, YOU'D BETTER SEEK ADVICE FROM SOMEONE MATURE, RATHER THAN A KID LIKE ME...

I THINK... SOOU UNIVERSITY IS THE BETTER CHOICE.

HMM.

WE MIGHT MAKE MORE GAMES TOGETHER EVEN WHEN YOU'RE A COLLEGE STUDENT.
...IF YOU GO THERE,
WHY DO YOU THINK SOOU IS BETTER?
MORE IMPORTANTLY, YOU ALREADY HAVE A CAREER, SO YOU DON'T NEED TO LOOK FOR A JOB,
SO CAN'T YOU JUST DO MY BIDDING IN YOUR FREE TIME WHEN YOU DON'T WRITE NOVELS IN THE NEXT FOUR YEARS?
ANYWAY, I DON'T KNOW EXACTLY WHAT STUDY IN LITERATURE DEALS WITH.
LOOK, I HEARD COLLEGE STUDENTS HAVE MORE FREE TIME.
I KNOW I HAVE NO CHOICE.
...OF COURSE, IF YOU SAY YOU DON'T WANT TO WORK WITH ME EVER AGAIN,
AS LUCK WOULD HAVE IT...
THEN THIS GAME WE'RE MAKING THIS YEAR MIGHT BE OUR LAST ONE,

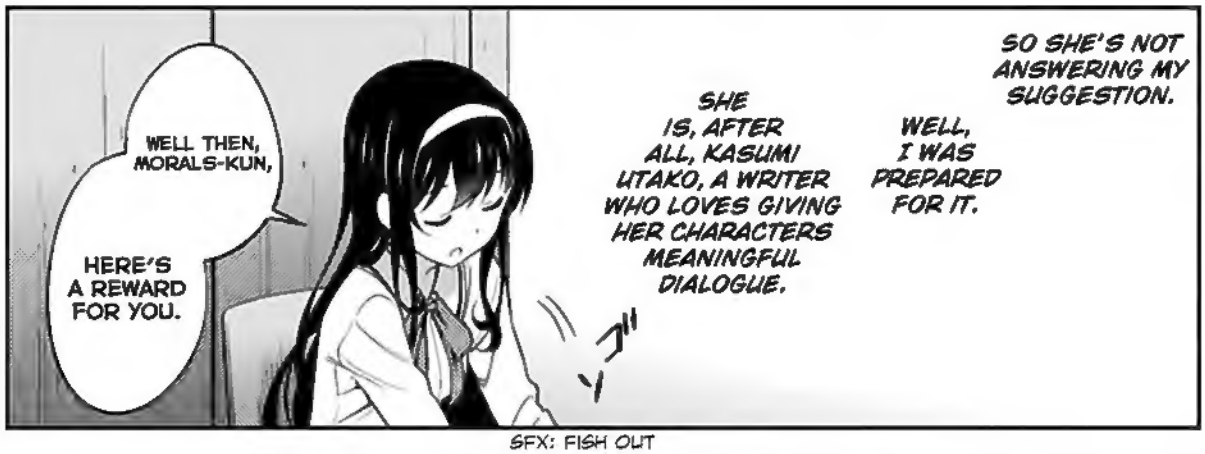
BUT I DON'T WANT TO ERASE THE ALTERNATIVE
WITH MY OWN HAND.

SFX: SIGH~

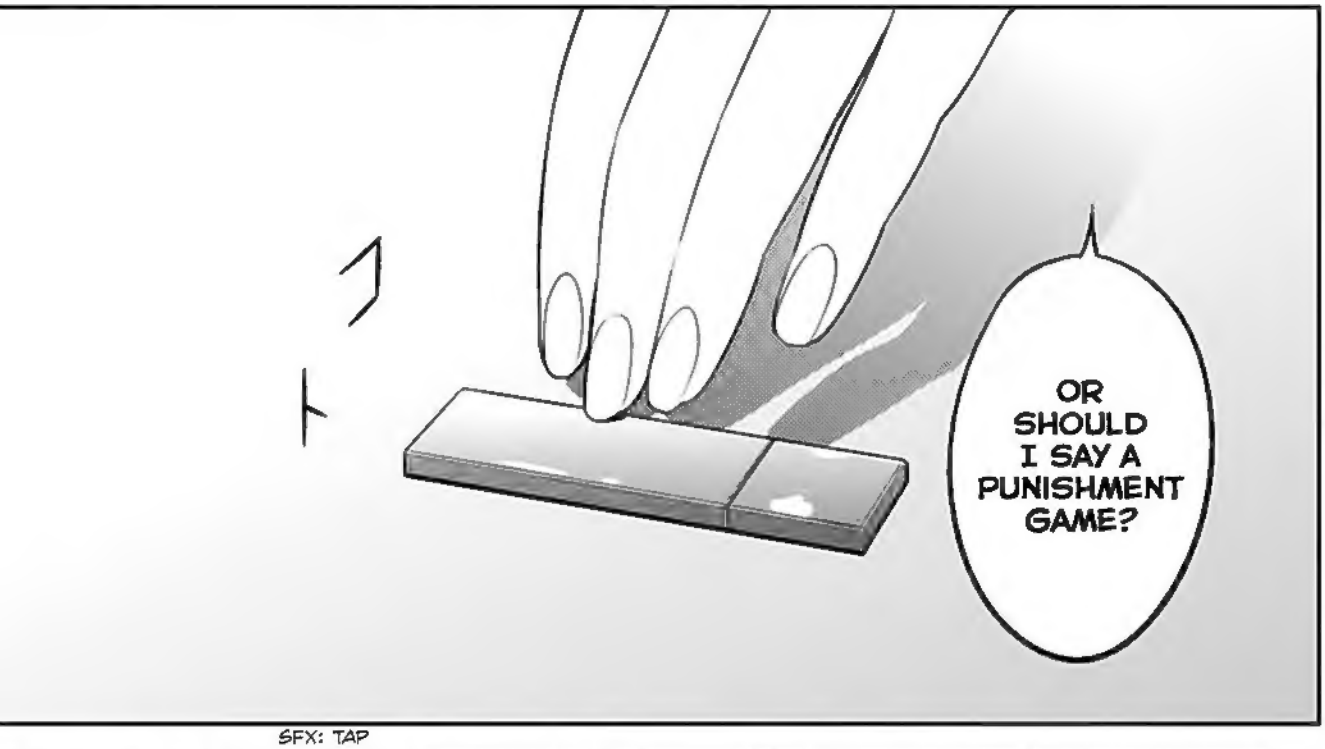
IS THAT HOW YOU INTER-PRETED IT...?

...I DIDN'T EXPECT YOU TO TRY SEDUCING ME SO STRAIGHTFOR-WARDLY.

I FEEL LIKE I SHOULD COMPLIMENT YOU A LITTLE.
THAT PRETEXT'S A LITTLE ANNOYING, BUT YOU DID A FINE JOB.
THANKS.


SO SHE'S NOT ANSWERING MY SUGGESTION.
WELL, I WAS PREPARED FOR IT.
SHE IS, AFTER ALL, KASUMI UTAKO, A WRITER WHO LOVES GIVING HER CHARACTERS MEANINGFUL DIALOGUE.
WELL THEN, MORALS-KUN,
HERE'S A REWARD FOR YOU.

SFX: FISH OUT



SFX: TAP

THE SECOND DRAFT OF THE TRUE ROUTE.

S-SENPAI ...?
WHAT ...?
THIS IS... ANOTHER POSSIBILITY THAT OUR GAME HOLDS.

ABOVE ALL, WHICH ONE DO YOU PREFER?
TELL ME: WHICH ONE IS MORE FUN? WHICH ONE WILL GET A BETTER RECEPTION? WHICH ONE WILL SELL MORE?
I WANT YOU TO DECIDE BETWEEN THE FIRST AND SECOND VERSIONS.
END

冴えない彼女の育てかた

Saenai heroine no sodate-kata.

SAENAI KANOJO
NO SODATEKATA
BY: MARUTO FUMIAKI &
MORIKI TAKESHI
CHAPTER 23

Brought you by:
CAT Scans &
Norway Scan

RAW PROVIDER: SHIRATORI
TRANSLATOR: ANONYMOUS PREFERRED
PROOFREADER: VOLANDUM
CLEANER: YABOKU
REDRAWER: DARKHELLSING
TYPESETTER: KRISTJAN
QUALITY CHECKER: VOLANDUM, KRISTJAN